

LOUD AND CLEAR

Fall 2017

Volume 29, Issue 3

In This Issue

[Assistive Technology and Resource Fair](#)

[Thank You](#)

[Upcoming Holidays](#)

['Tour of the Eye' Series](#)

[Friends Helping Friends](#)

[Elections Tuesday, November 7](#)

[Reading Roundup](#)

[Agency on Aging: Caregiving Seminars](#)

[NLS – News of Note](#)

[Virginia NFB Convention in Tysons Corner Nov 3-5](#)

[Medical House Calls from INOVA](#)

[Audio-Described Movies, 2nd Fridays](#)

[Vendor List -- 2017 Resource Fair](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Assistive Technology and Resource Fair

“I found new technologies that will help with my macular degeneration.”

“I was able to sign up for a library card and register my mother for the Talking Book Program.”

The previous quotes were from participants at the Resource Fair.

On Thursday, September 7, Access Services sponsored the Assistive Technology and Resource Fair at the Fairfax County Government Center. There were over 200 attendees who visited 30 plus vendor tables, heard the keynote speech, learned about BARD mobile services, had glaucoma screenings or just visited the Access Services branch and enjoyed lunch. The vendors consisted of other county agencies, non-profit organizations and businesses that demonstrated products for primarily the low vision community. All vendors were pleased with the number of attendees and felt that valuable information was shared throughout the entire duration of the program.

After an introduction by Jessica Hudson, the Director of the Fairfax County Public Library, Karen Keninger, the Director of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) presented the keynote address. She told the audience of her own experiences as a decades-long customer of the Talking Book program. She remembered when her books would arrive and the joy of receiving “brown paper packages, wrapped up in string”, and she did assure us that they were, indeed, her ‘favorite things.’

Ms. Keninger, in some of her remarks, explained that all titles that are on the bestsellers lists from the Washington Post, the New York Times or the Los Angeles Times for at least four weeks are recorded, that 60% of the NLS collection is fiction, and that there are also 75 current event magazines that are part of the recorded collection. She also mentioned that the NLS collection has recently been enhanced by the addition of commercially recorded books, locally produced titles, and creating digital copies of titles that were originally recorded in analog. She asked for questions and comments and received positive feedback from the audience along with some ideas on areas to improve.

The Fair also featured Patrick Timony, Librarian, Adaptive Technology from the District of Columbia Public Library who conducted BARD and BARD Express informational workshops and The Prevention of Blindness Society who conducted glaucoma screenings.

All in all, it was a grand day of sharing connections, exploring new learning opportunities and discovering some of the many resources that are available to the low vision community. We hope to see you all next year!

“The Program looks fantastic and it is so worthwhile.” -an Access Services liaison team member

“Very Impressive.” – a VIP support group member

“Thank you for a job well done! What a great day showcasing Access services and NLS service to the community.”

Thank You

The staff of Access Services want to extend their sincere appreciation to all who made the Resource Fair a resounding success. From Karen Keninger for setting such a wonderful tone, to the workshop leaders, to our colleagues in the Administration Department and branch liaisons who helped in so many ways, and to our wonderful volunteers who did not hesitate to work extended time shifts and share their talents. It was truly a united effort. We would be remiss if we did not mention all the vendors who attended and contributed their knowledge, services and products. And, finally, a large thank you to all of you who attended the event and brought your enthusiasm and willingness to learn.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Upcoming Holidays

Please note that the Access Services office as well as all county offices will be closed for the following holidays. Also note that for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays the office will be closed for four days. Please remember to request enough reading material early enough to keep you reading!

Veterans Day	Friday November 10, 2017
Thanksgiving	Thursday, November 23, 2017
Day After Thanksgiving	Friday, November 24, 2017
Christmas Eve	Friday, December 22, 2017
Christmas	Monday, December 25, 2017
New Year's Day	Monday, January 1, 2018
Martin Luther King Day	Monday, January 15, 2018
Presidents Day	Monday, February 19, 2018

‘Tour of the Eye’ Series

Access Services, in co-operation with the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington (POB), is hosting several seminars throughout the county entitled “A Tour of the Eye.” The next program will be Monday, November 13, 2017 from 1:00 p.m. until 2:30 p.m. at the City of Fairfax Library. The City of Fairfax Library is located at 10360 North Street, Fairfax, VA 22030. The program will meet in Room A.

Join Stephen S. Pappas Jr., M.D., of the Center for Retinal Diseases and Surgery, as we learn about the architecture of the eye from front to back, including the four major aging eye diseases: cataract, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and age-related macular degeneration. There is no registration required. We hope to see you there!

The POB also sponsors a monthly phone-in ‘Question and Answer Session with an Expert.’ The next program in this series will take place on Tuesday, November 28. The guest speaker will be Jocelyn King, M.D. who is a Washington National Eye Center ophthalmology resident. Dr. King will discuss diabetic eye disease. To join the conversation, call (712)775-7031 and then enter access code 881847675#. You can join in from any phone. For more information call the POB at (202) 234-1010.

Friends Helping Friends

The Friends of Access Services is a group of customers, and other interested parties, who serve as an advisory panel for Access Services. They exchange practical and useful information and believe that this information may also benefit other AS customers and/or LOUD AND CLEAR readers.

In this continuing column, ‘Friends Helping Friends’ the Friends exchange helpful tips and experiences from the user’s point of view. The Friends are interested in receiving your feedback. Explore their website at [Friends of Access Services](#) or contact Access Services at 703-324-8380 for more information. New members are always welcomed.

In this issue, the Friends look at grocery delivery services.

Grocery Delivery Services
by Stan Gowin

Grocery delivery services have come into being as a way to offer busy people alternatives to going to the store, picking out groceries, waiting in check-out lines to purchase them and taking the groceries back home again. Can grocery delivery services help the vision-impaired shop for groceries?

Vision impaired people have several challenges when grocery shopping. They must arrange transportation to and from the store, find a way to locate and choose their grocery items, navigate through the store to continue shopping and finally, locate the check-out area and purchase their items. A grocery delivery service should be ideal for doing this. They promise to provide a method for picking the items wanted, provide shoppers to locate these items and choose fresh produce, meats and other perishable goods and then deliver the groceries to one's front door. The delivery services come with a cost and offer different options for delivery times, flexibility when handling problems with the delivered order and different interfaces for choosing the groceries to be delivered.

Deciding on which delivery service to use can be daunting. Not all locales are supported by any given service. The websites used to find and add groceries to a shopping list offer different levels of accessibility and customer service or support can vary widely. It is also difficult to obtain useful information about grocery delivery services by calling a local grocery store. Most store employees are unaware of delivery options.

To get started with a grocery delivery service, one must decide which grocery chain to use and which delivery service is supported by the chain. Some chains like Giant Food are supported by more than one delivery service, while other chains like Trader Joe's do not currently support any grocery delivery options. Delivery services are also not available in all locations. Each delivery service provides a way to determine if they operate in one's geographic location, and provide information about which stores are supported.

The major delivery services in the Northern Virginia area are Peapod, InstaCart and Amazon Fresh. In addition, some grocery chains like Harris-Teeter or Walmart offer online shopping with the option to pick up groceries at a local store.

Peapod

The longest serving delivery company in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, Peapod has been delivering groceries for over 20 years. They support Giant Food. The Peapod website is generally accessible with screen magnifiers

and screen readers. The search function works fairly well, especially if one is willing to enter general food categories like “canned tomatoes” or “skim milk”. Several screens may be displayed with different varieties of “canned tomatoes” but it is easy to choose the item desired and add it to the shopping cart. Searching with more specific terms, especially when brand-names are not used or are misspelled when used, often yields less than satisfactory results.

Peapod’s telephone customer support is good, especially during the sign-up process.

Peapod requires a minimum grocery order of \$60, so it isn’t for those times when one wants one or two items delivered. They offer a generous discount on delivery fees for the first two deliveries.

Delivery times are flexible, but they seem to prefer delivering on a recurring schedule. Peapod recommends someone be home if an order contains perishables such as ice cream.

Customers report mixed results with produce, with some being of low quality when delivered. Reports of broken eggs and other problems were reported by some customers.

When a problem with the delivered groceries is reported to Peapod, they promptly credit the buyer’s account.

Giant coupons are not supported by Peapod, but sale items are reflected on the Peapod website. Product coupons are supported, but it is up to the delivery driver to turn them in and reimbursement from Peapod can be slow.

InstaCart

InstaCart supports the largest number of grocery chains in the Northern Virginia area. They support delivery from Wegmans, Costco, Whole Foods, Giant, Shopper’s Food, Safeway, Harris-Teeter, Petco and CVS.

Delivery fees are lower than for Peapod, but the websites are dependent on the grocery chain chosen. This is a very mixed bag for accessibility. It can be very difficult to find and order specific items and many items are not available. Using a generic search can lead to multiple displayed pages of items and it can be difficult to identify some displayed items.

Ordering through the InstaCart pages rather than the grocer's pages is simpler, but the variety of items displayed is reduced.

Ordering produce was difficult because the pictures presented are not clear. One customer reported paying \$5 for the smallest watermelon she has ever seen. It was apparently the size of a grapefruit. Expiration dates on delivered dairy products may have a shorter time limit than those one might choose when picking the items in the store.

The minimum order for InstaCart is \$35, and the delivery fee is said to be about \$6. Same day delivery is available from some stores.

The personal shoppers employed by InstaCart also deliver the groceries. Therefore, they have a vested interest in customer satisfaction. The low delivery fee means the delivery personnel expect to be tipped in the 15% to 20% range. The tip may be paid online. However, on large orders this can substantially increase the cost of the groceries.

Amazon Fresh

Amazon has been increasing their presence in the grocery delivery business and with their purchase of Whole Foods this summer they have a chain of local stores to draw merchandise from. They do offer delivery in parts of Fairfax County, but not all Whole Food stores are up and running with the service yet.

The website for ordering is very accessible, and there is a great deal of non-perishable items available. Dairy, meat and produce is more limited, especially in regard to the brands offered, but more variety is promised soon.

Amazon customer support is usually excellent, and they promise same day delivery for Amazon Prime members.

Conclusion

Grocery delivery services hold promise for those who due to vision loss or other impairment find it difficult to shop for groceries. However, care must be taken to match a store with a delivery service. Some of the websites available from the services are hard to use. Produce and other perishable items may not be as high in quality as one might choose if shopping in the store. Customer service is generally good, and poor quality items can be rejected for a refund. Delivery

times vary with each service provider as due minimum charges and delivery fees.

Whether a grocery delivery service is right for you depends on whether you have other means to get your groceries and the kind of food preparation you do at home. Brand-name items, packaged items and non-perishable items are the easiest to buy and least likely to be of lesser quality when delivered. If you're picky about your produce be sure to understand the delivery service's policies regarding item returns, expiration dates etc. If you use coupons, results are mixed when attempting to apply them to delivered groceries.

It is good that delivery options are available in the Northern Virginia area, but it will take some experimentation to determine if a given delivery service is right for you.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thank you, Stan, for this comprehensive and informative article.

The Friends are interested in our feedback. Have you had additional experiences with food delivery services? Are there other topics you would like the Friends Helping Friends to explore? Contact Ken Plummer with your responses at access@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Elections Tuesday, November 7

The Fairfax County Board of Elections reminds us that Tuesday, November 7 is the general election. Polls are open from 6:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. On the ballot you will be choosing the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Attorney General and your Member to the Virginia House of Delegates.

There is a **\$315** million public school bonds referendum on the general election ballot. If approved by voters, the Fairfax County Public Schools plan to use the bond money in the following ways:

Plan and/or construct two new elementary schools, one in Fairfax/Oakton area and another in the Northwest county area.

Relocate one modular building

Plan additions to add capacity at three high schools; Madison, Stuart and West Potomac.

Plan and/or construct renovations of 10 elementary schools, three middle schools and two high schools.

In order to vote, you will need to show an acceptable photo identification card. Acceptable forms of identification are: Virginia driver's license, Virginia DMV-issued photo ID, United States passport, Employer-issued photo ID, Student photo ID issued by a school, college, or university located in Virginia, or other U.S. or Virginia government-issued photo IDs.

If you have other questions such as where to vote, visit [Fairfax County, Office of Elections](#).

Reading Roundup

In this issue we look at titles that feature Washington DC as their locale and also check some titles that Karen Keninger mentioned in her remarks at the Resource Fair, the non-fiction series of "A Very Short Introduction to..."

First, we visit Washington D.C.

George Pelecanos's body of work. Many of his 20 books are in the genre of detective fiction and set primarily in his hometown of Washington, D.C. His most recent novel is:

The Double by George Pelecanos. **DB 77218**

Spero Lucas specializes in recovering stolen property, and that is exactly what Grace Kinkaid hired him to do--retrieve the valuable painting her ex-boyfriend took from her. But Grace also wants Lucas to find the violent career criminal who humiliated her. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. 2013. [d around Washington, D.C](#)

James Patterson, Alex Cross series. Alex Cross is a psychologist and a former homicide detective with the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Police Department and also a former Senior Agent with the FBI.

Cross Kill: an Alex Cross Story by James Patterson. **DB 85070**

Killer Gary Soneji, last seen in **Along Came a Spider (DB 35894)**, has been dead for over ten years. Alex Cross watched him die. But today, Cross saw him gun down his partner. Is Soneji alive? A ghost? Or something even more sinister? Violence and strong language. Commercial audiobook. 2016.

A Good Life: Newspapering and Other Adventures by Ben Bradlee **DB**

43308

Bradlee, the editor of the Washington Post for twenty-six years, believes he has had a "good life" simply because he was often in the right place at the right time. Bradlee's portrait of his life, including schooling, military service, family, and career, depicts people he worked with and the events he covered as a writer and editor. Some strong language. Bestseller.

The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears by Dinaw Megestu **DB 64260**

Stephanos operates a shabby store in a gentrifying neighborhood, hangs out with other African exiles, and muses about American life. Missing a family, he befriends a white woman and her biracial daughter when they move next door. Strong language. 2007.

Personal History by Katherine Graham **DB 43945**

Memoir of a celebrated woman publisher of the Washington Post. Recounts her father's purchase of the Post in 1934 and her marriage to Phil Graham, who managed the newspaper until his suicide in 1963. Katharine reluctantly took over and became by some accounts "the most powerful woman in the world." Bestseller.

As mentioned by Karen Keninger, there is a non-fiction series entitled, 'Very Short Introductions ...'. This series features recorded titles on an extremely wide area of subjects. Here are some examples of the titles in this series. Ask for your reader advisor about your favorite subject today.

Corruption: a Very Short Introduction by Leslie Holmes **DB 86076**

Explores corruption in government and business--starting with experts' disagreement over precisely what it is. Discusses cultural differences in what constitutes corrupt behavior; its social, legal, political, and economic impacts; systemic causes of corruption; and national and international efforts to fight it. 2015.

Folk Music: a Very Short Introduction by Mark Slobin **DB 86382**

Award-winning music professor explores a genre that eludes simple definition, presenting examples from every part of the world. Discusses social movements, channeling strong sentiments (of religion, longing, protest), the effect of rural to urban migrations, and the influence of recording machines, researchers, record companies, and YouTube. 2011.

The Aztecs: a Very Short Introduction by David Carrasco **DB 85613**

A history of the Mesoamerican empire that included more than five million people at the time Spanish general Hernán Cortés arrived in 1519. Discusses the foundation, expansion, and fall of the Aztec civilization; its art, architecture, and philosophy; and its rituals of human sacrifice. 2012.

Agency on Aging: Caregiving Seminars

The Area Agency on Aging is sponsoring these free Seminars for Family Caregivers. They are designed to help family caregivers of older adults and/or adults with a disability manage the day-to-day issues that caregiving presents. [Register online](#), email Caregiver@fairfaxcounty.gov, or call 703-324-5205, TTY 711. To request reasonable ADA accommodations, call 703-324-5868, TTY 711.

Fall 2017 Seminars for Family Caregivers:

Caregiving Through the Holidays — WEBINAR

Thursday, November 2 — 12-1 p.m.

Location: Your computer or telephone. You will receive an email with access instructions.

Effective Communication Strategies in Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia — WEBINAR

Wednesday, November 15 — 12-1 p.m.

Location: Your computer or telephone. You will receive an email with access instructions.

Strategies for Difficult Conversations

Thursday, November 16 — 7-8:30 p.m.

Location: Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center Street, **Herndon**
Directions: 703-437-8855, TTY 711

Medicare 101 Events.

The Medicare Election Period from October 15-December 7 is when you need to review your current Medicare health and drug plans to see if there will be changes for 2018. There can be changes in cost and coverage as well as in the listing of providers and pharmacies. Consider attending one of the county's upcoming **Medicare 101** events. Medicare experts will review what you need to know to make the best choices for 2018. [Find Medicare events.](#)

NLS – News of Note

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) has a new website and through the use of technology is continuing to improve service for their customers.

Web Site

NLS has remodeled their website, a new front door to showcase their services. The new website has similar information topics grouped together and is easier to navigate. It has features that blind and low-vision customers can use and is also appealing to sighted visitors looking for news and information.

Websites in 2017 are never truly “done,” and the NLS one is no different. . If there are problems encountered, fixes that are necessary, or suggestions you would like to make there is a link right on the homepage asking for your feedback. Make use of it—that’s what it is there for.

Check out the changes at [the NLS website](#).

Analog to Digital Conversion

NLS has nearly completed the project of converting their analog cassettes into digital audio. This project has been underway since 2003. Today there are 95,000 titles available digitally and that number includes more than 42,000 items that were originally recorded as cassettes.

So...if there is an ‘older’ title or author that you are interested in reading let your reader advisor know, we might have a new digital copy waiting just for you.

Wireless Downloads

NLS is also developing simple devices with a built-in wireless service that can act as a wireless mail carrier. This technology would eventually enable talking book files (books) to be directly transmitted to a customer’s home device, enabling a quicker and more personalized path to receiving books.

Braille eReaders

Braille eReaders turn digital braille files into braille for tactile reading

instantaneously. They have been around for several decades but have had limited use. Along with the Perkins Library in Massachusetts, NLS is investigating a method to distribute digital braille files to a person's individual refreshable braille display that would be both affordable and could be widely used. The goal is to have this technology become more flexible, accessible and manageable.

Virginia NFB Convention in Tysons Corner Nov 3-5

The National Federation of the Blind of Virginia will be holding its convention in Tyson's Corner at the Westin Tysons Corner Hotel, 7801 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, Virginia 22043. (Contact information for the hotel is: phone: (703) 893-1340, website: [visit Westin in Tysons Corner.](#)) The convention will be held November 3 - 5.

There will be specific programming for all ages and programs for both lifelong blind and those who have recently lost their vision. The exhibits will spotlight the newest and latest adaptive technology and representatives will provide face-to-face discussions. The convention provides excellent networking opportunities with positive blind role models, fellowship with old and new friends, and some of the best presentations on topics important to the blind.

For further information, contact Tracy Soforenko at 202 285-4595 or tracy.soforenko@gmail.com

Medical House Calls from INOVA

The Inova House Calls program is designed to bring primary care to homebound patients who have advanced or complex illness. The healthcare team includes doctors, nurse practitioners, and social workers. The primary care team will coordinate your health and wellness programs.

This program is tailored for patients who are over 65, have difficulty leaving home for medical appointments, and have Medicare, Medicaid or other health insurance that will pay for homebound care. It can help people aged 65 or older manage falling or the risk of falling, loss or change in functional ability, multiple chronic illnesses and the use of multiple medications. The program can assist the stresses of caregiving that can affect family members.

To learn if you or a family member is eligible for the Medical House Calls

Program contact 571-328-7775.

Audio-Described Movies, 2nd Fridays

NOTE: There will NOT be a movie club meeting in November. The library will be closed on Friday, November 10 for Veteran's Day.

There will be a movie on Friday, December 8. The movie will be shown in Room 123C at the Fairfax County Government Center (part of Suite 123, home to Access Services) at 1:00 p.m. There will be light snacks. Brown bags are welcome. There is a cafeteria located across the hall.

This program is open to everyone and will feature audio-description for people with visual disabilities. Audio description allows visually impaired people to more fully appreciate movies through the additional scene narrations of the ongoing screen action.

Program schedule is subject to change. For title or other information or to request an accommodation, call 703-324-8380 or email access@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Vendor List -- 2017 Resource Fair

This is a list of many of the organizations and agencies that were present at the Resource Fair along with their contact information. The vendors who worked mostly with educational resources or parenting and children's concerns have not been listed.

County, State and Federal Agencies

Bureau of Engraving and Printing

Website: <https://www.moneyfactory.gov/>

202-874-4000

Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired

<https://www.vdbvi.org>

(703) 359-1100

Fairfax County Department of Family Services – Adult & Aging

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/>

703-324-7500

Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem>

571-350-1000

Fairfax County Office of Humans Rights and Equity Programs

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ohrep/>

703-324-2953

Fairfax County Human Services Transportation, Neighborhood and
Community Services

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/>

703-324-4600

Service Organizations

American Council of the Blind

<http://acb.org/>

(800) 424-8666

ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia

www.ecnv.org

(703) 525-3268

Metropolitan Washington Ear

www.washear.org

(301) 681-6636

National Federation of the Blind – Fairfax

<http://www.nfbv.org/chapters-divisions/fairfax/>

Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons

<http://www.nvrc.org/>

(703) 352-9055

Prevention of Blindness Society

<http://www.youreyes.org/>

(202) 234-1010

Reston VIP/Vienna VIP Support groups Contact Access Services.
703-324-8380

Commercial Enterprises

ABLEnow

<https://www.able-now.com>

1-844-669-2253

Adiant Mobile

<https://www.adiantmobile.com/>

(877) 980-4477

Innocaption

<https://www.innocaption.com>

(703) 865-5553

NuEyes & Iwear Tec

<https://nueyes.com/>

Senior Helpers of Fairfax

<https://www.seniorhelpers.com/fairfax-va>

703-436-9251

SPRINT Accessibility

<https://www.sprint.com/en/shop/services/accessibility.html>

TCS Associates

<https://www.tcsassociates.com/>

VFO

<http://www.vfogroup.com/>

727-803-8000

Virginia Hospital Center

<https://www.virginiahospitalcenter.com/>

703-717-7000

WINTech

(703) 690-9008

Contact Us

If you have questions, comments or suggestions concerning the *Loud & Clear* newsletter, please call Ken Plummer at 703-324-8389. You may also e-mail him at access@fairfaxcounty.gov.



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12000 Government Center Pkwy.
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www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library



A Fairfax County, Va.,
publication

 Reasonable accommodations will be made
upon request. Call 703-324-8380 or TTY
703- 324-8365.